

HOLINESS DEFINED *Student's Copy*

A simplified but doctrinally robust study of Biblical holiness

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” — Hebrews 12:14

Study perspective: Holiness teaching consistent with the Apostolic Faith tradition: salvation, entire sanctification, and a continuing life of growth and obedience.

Learning Goals

- Explain carnality in clear Biblical language.
- Explain Christian perfection without confusing it with angelic, intellectual or physical perfection.
- Describe holiness in the believer, holiness of heart, and holiness of life.
- Distinguish salvation, entire sanctification, and continuing Christian growth.
- Show how inward holiness must produce outward holy living.

1. What Is Carnality?

CARNALITY

In simple words: The inward bent toward sin inherited from Adam — a corrupted desire that resists God’s holy will.

Doctrinal meaning: Humanity was created in God’s moral image with pure desires, but the Fall corrupted those desires. Carnality is the inward sinful disposition or principle of rebellion that remains in the regenerated believer until entire sanctification.

Picture it: Think of a compass whose needle has been bent. It still points somewhere, but its inner direction is distorted. Carnality is an inward distortion that pulls desire away from God’s will.

Key Scriptures: Genesis 1:27, 31; Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24

Biblical/theological expressions: sin; body of sin; flesh; nature of sin; Adamic nature; carnal nature; carnal mind; inbred sin; inherited depravity; principle of sin; evil or divided heart; inward sinful disposition; inward rebellion toward God’s will.

1. **How is carnality different from an outward act of sin?**

2. **Why is it important to distinguish temptation from carnality?**

2. What Is Christian Perfection?

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

In simple words: A heart made perfect in love — fully consecrated to God, cleansed from carnality, and filled with pure love.

Doctrinal meaning: It is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit by which a regenerated believer is entirely sanctified. It is moral perfection or perfection in love, not equality with God and not freedom from normal human limitations.

Picture it: Picture a clean cup completely given to its owner and filled with clean water. The cup may still be small or fragile, but what fills it is pure. Christian perfection concerns the purity and devotion of the heart, not unlimited human ability.

Key Scriptures: Matthew 5:44–48; 1 Thessalonians 3:12–13

Christian perfection does NOT mean:

- angelic perfection
- God's absolute perfection in omniscience or omnipotence
- freedom from temptation
- freedom from ignorance or weakness
- freedom from infirmities, mistakes, errors of judgment, or physical/psychological limitations

It DOES mean: a cleansed, consecrated heart whose governing motive is wholehearted love for God and neighbour.

3. Can a sanctified Christian still make mistakes?

4. Why must a 'perfect heart' remain teachable?

Three Perspectives on Holiness

Perspective	What it means	Illustration
Holiness in the believer	God restores the believer to His moral image: separated from sin and dedicated to God.	A person changing ownership: “I belong to God.”
Holiness of heart	The inward sinful disposition is cleansed and the heart is filled with pure love for God and others.	A spring made clean at its source, so clean water can flow.
Holiness of life	The outward expression of inward holiness through obedience, Christlike character, righteous conduct and love.	Root → tree → fruit: a holy heart produces a holy life.

Holiness in the Believer Begins at Salvation

At salvation, the sinner is born again (John 3:3–8), regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), and becomes a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). The believer is delivered from the dominion and power of sin and begins a new life of righteousness and obedience.

Carnality and salvation: the source material states that at conversion carnality is crucified with Christ (Galatians 5:24), though not yet destroyed until entire sanctification (Romans 6:6).

Holiness: a Crisis and a Process



Important distinction: spiritual growth is progressive, but the cleansing work of entire sanctification is presented here as a definite and instantaneous work of grace.

Hebrews 12:14 — What Does It Mean? “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

This verse teaches the necessity of a holy life. Holiness begins at salvation and is evidenced in a life devoted to God. The believer is to pursue holiness from conversion; entire sanctification is the subsequent heart-cleansing work that removes the carnal nature.

Do not misunderstand it as...	Understand it as...
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“A person must first be entirely sanctified before he or she can enter Heaven.”

A genuine believer must live a holy life; holiness is the evidence and fruit of genuine faith, and the believer should go on to seek entire sanctification.

Heart and Life Must Agree

INWARD → OUTWARD

In simple words: God changes the heart, and the changed heart shows itself in the way we live.

Doctrinal meaning: Holiness is neither merely an inward claim nor merely outward separation. A purified heart expresses itself through righteous behaviour, obedience, humility, compassion, purity, self-denial, mercy, and love.

Picture it: A healthy root produces healthy fruit. The fruit does not make the root alive; it reveals the life already working within.

Key Scriptures : Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Key Word Review

Key word	Plain meaning	Picture it
Regeneration	The new birth: the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to the repentant sinner who believes.	A dead seed made alive and beginning to grow.
Consecration	The believer's complete surrender and dedication of self to God.	Handing God the keys — nothing held back.
Entire Sanctification	A definite, instantaneous work of grace after salvation in which the believing, consecrated heart is cleansed from carnality and filled with perfect love.	A fountain cleansed at its source.
Perfect Love	Wholehearted love for God and love toward others from a purified heart.	A heart with one governing loyalty: God.

Holy Life

The visible fruit of inward grace: obedience, purity, Christlike character and love.

Good fruit growing from a healthy tree.

Spiritual Growth

The continuing development of a believer in knowledge, maturity, wisdom, grace and Christlike practice.

A child growing into mature adulthood.

Discussion and Application

5. Why is holiness more than simply following a list of rules?

6. How can a believer be holy and still be growing?

7. What should we expect to see in a holy life?

8. What is the relationship between salvation and entire sanctification?

9. What should someone do who sees the need for a clean heart?

Summary

Holiness begins at salvation, reaches a definite heart-cleansing crisis in entire sanctification, and continues in lifelong growth. The sanctified believer is not made superhuman or incapable of error; rather, the heart is purified from carnality and made perfect in love. The inward work of grace must be seen outwardly in obedience, purity, humility, mercy, compassion, self-denial, and love.